

Of Fists and Firsts by ohmybgosh

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Summary:

Will witnesses a moment between Steve and Billy.

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Author's Note:

- Translation into **Русский** available: [Of Fists and Firsts](#) by [nadiasna7](#)

Prompt from tumblr: "Hi! Just wondering if you could suggest a super soft Billy/Steve first kiss? Steve is patching Billy up after an altercation and Billy is super defeated. But Steve is there with soft touches (that Billy drinks up and leans into), whispered affirmations and the guts to go in for that kiss? This would be so amazing!"

Thank you! I'm not sure if this was exactly what you were looking for, but the idea to make it Will's POV hit me and then there was no going back!

Send me a prompt on tumblr or just come scream at me :)

February, 1985

Will Byers sits on the old sunken couch in his living room, smiling as Dustin and Lucas and Max, seated on the floor, argue over which *Scooby Doo* character is the best. Dustin and Lucas think that it's Scooby, because, as Lucas says, without Scooby there'd be no show at all. Max argues that Velma is the best, because she's the smartest and she's a girl. Mike, beside Will, is explaining the cartoon to Eleven, on Mike's other side, who has never seen it before and is watching the exchange with amusement.

The house is warm, stuffy in a cozy winter way, the smell of his mother's broccoli potato cheddar casserole wafts out of the kitchen. Jonathan is out with Nancy, on a date to the movies, and his mom picked up the closing shift at the store, to remedy the dent in her savings left by Christmas.

Will feels bad about that, so does Jonathan; they tell their mother every December not to worry this time around, that a small gift or no gifts at all will suffice, but Joyce Byers always smiles and shakes her head and says “I’ve got something good for you this year.” For Jonathan, it turns out to be a new camera, which he freaks out about because “Mom, how much did this cost!?” and for Will, it’s an easel and a stack of crisp new canvases, with a set of oil paints. “An upgrade from crayons,” his mom says with a smile.

Hopper is also working late, on call because of some recent domestic disputes, which is why El is sitting happily at Mike’s side.

The phone rings suddenly, startling Will. He stands, stretches, and scuffs over to where it hangs from the wall in the hallway. Steve, who doesn’t hear the phone, is in the kitchen, leaning over the counter, flipping through one of Will’s *Batman* comics, checking over his shoulder every now and then to where the casserole bakes away in the oven, and singing “*don’t you want me baby, don’t you want me bayyyyybayyyy*” under his breath.

Will picks up the phone. The person speaks before he can say hello.

“Is Max there?” The voice is low and husky, and it trembles a bit.

“May I ask who’s calling?” Will answers, in the way his mom taught him. Never give your name until you know who it is.

“It’s Billy. Her brother.”

Will sucks in a breath at that. He’s never actually spoken to Billy, but he knows all about him. He knows Billy is a “giant asswipe” (Dustin) but he’s “getting better” (Max). He knows Billy beat the crap out of Steve and threatened Lucas, but he also knows that was nearly five months ago now, and that much has changed. He knows Lucas is no longer nervous around Billy, because Billy apologized, sincerely, and he knows Max looks forward to seeing her brother now. He knows Billy and Steve are friends, and he knows Dustin finds it strange. He knows Mike is wary but tolerates Billy because El actually really likes him, and when anyone asks why she shrugs and says “Have a good feeling.” Will knows it’s an “El thing”, which is what they all fondly refer to as her psychic powers.

He has never interacted with Billy. Billy, when he picks Max up, waits at the end of the driveway if Steve's not there, and when Steve is there he knocks, and spends most of the time hovering over Steve's shoulder, cracking jokes and grinning wider the more Steve gets irritated.

He also knows that Billy is attractive, and it makes him blush to think about it. He had a friend named Ian once in fifth grade, and Ian was tan and had long blonde hair and blue eyes and sometimes Will wished he could marry him. But Ian moved to Iowa that following summer, and Will never heard from him again. Billy reminds him of Ian. Billy has thick dark eyelashes and red lips, and Steve always teases Billy for his earring and his hair and his button down shirts, but Will privately thinks it's a good look.

“Hello?” Billy asks on the other end of the line, a little impatient.

Will jumps.

“Sorry,” he stutters. “Yes, she’s here. Should I put her on?”

“No, no,” Billy’s voice shakes again. “Just tell her I’ll be there in ten minutes.”

“Ok,” Will says, but Billy has already hung up the phone.

Will sets the handset back on the receiver and makes his way back into the living room. Steve looks up and smiles at him as he passes, and Will smiles back.

He likes Steve. He felt a little weird at first, because of the whole “my brother stole your girlfriend” thing, but Steve acts like none of that ever happened, is awkward but kind to Jonathan, and treats Will the same way he treats the rest of the Party. Will’s grateful, because the amount of people who treat him like a normal human being is slim, to say the least.

He slides back into his spot beside Mike, who glances up when Will sits.

“Who was on the phone?” he asks, and Will smiles, because he can hear that sad little whine in Mike’s voice, the one that creeps out

when El has to go, and he knows Mike is worried it's Hopper who was calling.

"Billy," he says. "He said he'll be here in ten minutes, Max."

Max looks up, confused. "He's early."

Lucas looks at her disparagingly, because he doesn't want her to go, and Will smiles again. Sometimes it makes his heart constrict, seeing the way Mike looks at El, the way Lucas looks at Max, the way Jonathan looks at Nancy, and the way his mother had looked at Bob (a lump rises in his throat at that). When he's sad, he wonders whether or not he'll ever get to look at anyone like that. But he doesn't resent any of them for it, because they seem so happy. Dustin makes him feel better about it, too, because Dustin gets sad about the same thing. He also tells Will not to worry about it, because "we're young and hot" and then makes that weird Chewbacca noise that everyone else always rolls their eyes at but makes Will and El laugh hysterically.

There's a ding from the kitchen; the oven timer goes off. He hears Steve shuffling, still singing, and start taking out plates and silverware.

Will jumps up to help.

"Thanks," Steve says when Will grabs a stack of napkins, and Will tries to duck but is too late - Steve's hand lands on his head, ruffling his hair.

"Billy said he's coming early," Will says, handing Steve a serving spoon.

Steve looks at him questioningly. "Early?"

"To get Max. He just called."

Steve looks confused, and a little something else that Will can't quite place.

They finish spooning up casserole for everyone, and Steve's just calling everyone over to grab a plate, when there's a knock on the

front door.

“Oh no,” El whispers, and Mike looks at her, concerned.

Steve still has oven mitts on, so Will bounds to the front door, pulling it open. He gasps when he does, and instantly feels sorry.

Billy is there, hands shoved in his pockets, head bowed in the cold. Will can still see it though, the angry red bump on Billy’s cheek, the size of a fist, and the dried blood that crusts around his nose, and the slash over his top lip that still bleeds freely.

“Is Max ready?” he asks, and Will can really hear the tremor in his voice now, can see it travel from his trembling lower lip, down his shoulders and to his legs which seem to be barely holding him up.

Max is at Will’s side in an instant, as if she expected this. “ *Billy.* ”

“S’fine,” he says, glancing up. And the bruise is worse than Will thought; he can see a ring sized welt right in the center of it.

Steve is there suddenly, ushering Max and Will away from the door, oven mitts abandoned. He doesn’t say anything, just reaches out and takes Billy’s hand, pulling him into the warm house and shutting the door behind him.

Steve ignores Mike and Lucas, who gape at Billy’s face, and Dustin, who says “what the fuck!” El averts her eyes, blinking at the floor.

Steve leads Billy, who stumbles at Steve’s side, looking lost, to the bathroom. He doesn’t shut the door and Max jogs along behind them.

Will stands there, stunned. He knew this about Billy, too, about Max’s step-father. But he always assumed it was the way his own father was, with words that cut deep that stayed with him, long after the shock of him leaving. He never imagined the physical wounds.

“Did you see his *face* ?” Dustin hisses, wincing. Lucas and Mike shush him and El continues to stare at the floor. Will can see her eyes are wet and he suddenly feels the need to fix things, to pick up the pieces.

“Let’s eat,” he says hastily. Mike meets his eye, a silent understanding passing between them, a mark of their friendship, how long it’s been and how close they’ve grown.

They all carry their plates to the living room, leaving Max’s and Steve’s plates and the plate Steve had dished up for Billy to cool on the counter.

The sit on the floor and Will can hear hushed voices from the bathroom. El won’t eat, and Mike wraps an arm around her shoulders, whispering sweet somethings into her ear until she smiles sadly at him.

They eat in silence, and after a moment Dustin strikes up a conversation, something he read about automatons in a book he borrowed from Mr. Clarke, and Lucas hurries to answer, and Mike nods along like he’s listening, while his eyes are glued to El.

Max returns a moment later. Her eyes are red and puffy, and she grabs her plate from the counter, joins them on the floor, and starts shovelling food into her mouth.

She shakes her head when Lucas asks her if she’s ok, and they fall back into an uneasy silence, the only sounds the scraping of their forks against the plates, and Steve’s low voice, from the bathroom, that they’re all straining to hear.

Will finishes first and he gets up to put his plate in the sink. He walks slowly, and when his curiosity gets the better of him he slides silently down the hallway, pausing outside the bathroom door, slightly ajar.

He hears Billy swear and Steve’s hurried apology.

“Sorry, sorry,” Steve says. “I don’t want it to get infected.”

Billy doesn’t answer.

Will hears the crinkling of something being unwrapped, and he winces, because the only bandaids they have here are those tiny rainbow ones his mom uses when he gets a papercut or a splinter.

Sure enough Billy laughs, harshly. “What’s that supposed to do?”

“I don’t know,” Steve sighs. “S’all that’s here.”

“I’m fine, Harrington, really.”

“It’s Harrington now, is it?”

There’s a pause; Billy has gone silent.

“You don’t look fine,” Steve says quietly, and Will hears something in his voice, something meek and helpless.

“I am,” Billy snaps. There’s another silence, and then Billy breathes deeply.

“Sorry.”

“It’s ok.”

“Steve.”

Steve chuckles quietly.

“Billy?”

“Thanks.”

“Course.”

“Really, I...” Billy trails off and Will leans in a tad. “I don’t know...”

“It’s ok, Billy,” Steve assures him.

“No, it’s not. Steve - I don’t - I don’t know if I could do this. Without you.” Billy’s voice is low, barely a whisper, and he speaks slowly, as if each word comes with an immense, painful effort.

“I’m always here,” Steve murmurs, his voice catching.

It’s silent then, and there’s a shuffling sound, and Will leans in a tiny bit more; he can see them through the crack in the door, now, their reflections in the mirror.

They’re sitting on the edge of the tub. Steve has Billy’s hands in his

lap, he seems to have been patching up the small cuts there but now just holds them, and Billy leans slowly forward, his face pink, and when Steve glances up to meet his eyes Billy kisses him. It is unsteady, unsure, and oh so soft. Barely a brush of lips before Billy is pulling away.

“Sorry,” he breathes, looking anywhere but Steve. Will sees tears in Billy’s eyes.

Steve looks tearful too, and he reaches up, one hand lightly grasping Billy’s chin and turning Billy’s head so that Billy’s looking at him. Billy’s eyes are wide and he blinks once, twice.

“Don’t be,” Steve says softly. He smiles, trailing one finger down the side of Billy’s face, and Billy makes a sound at that, a small sound that seems to come from deep within him.

“Was I your first kiss?” He is teasing, now.

“First guy, yeah.” Steve smirks. He kneads his fingers into Billy’s long hair. “Wanna be my second, too?”

“Absolutely.” Billy kisses him again, harder, this time, with much more urgency, and Will backs away.

His heart is thumping wildly, mind spinning with what he just saw. He sneaks back into the living room, and the others have fallen back into their *Scooby Doo* conversation, with an easiness and innocence. None of them notice Will, except for El, who smiles at him.

When Steve and Billy emerge several long minutes later, Will can’t help but examine their faces. Billy, under dried cuts and that big bruise and several tiny rainbow band-aids, is grinning widely, so wide Will worries the cut on his lip will split open again. Steve’s face is pink, from the tip of his nose all the way to his ears.

Steve goes to the kitchen and starts doing the dishes, and Billy joins him, leaning against the counter beside Steve, watching him with intense eyes. Whenever Steve looks up Billy smiles, and Steve smiles back, shyly, and Billy leans in one of these times when their eyes meet to plant a kiss on Steve’s cheek.

That night, after Jonathan and his mom have come home and after everyone else has left, Will lies awake in bed, thinking hard.

He thinks about Billy and Steve kissing, and how *normal* they made it seem. He thinks of the way Billy looked at Steve while Steve washed the dishes; it's the way Bob and his mom used to smile at one another, the way Nancy and Jonathan share glances, the way Mike and El, Lucas and Max look at each other.

It makes Will's heart flutter hopefully.

Because if Billy looks at Steve that way, than, maybe someday, he will get to look at another boy that way, too.